

Team Garrett Walking/Walkability Plan

Part 1: Vision: *To create safe, convenient and identifiable walking environments where residents take advantage of the many accessible walking opportunities in our towns and parks, by walking for wellness, fun and as a means of transportation.*

Part 2: Background: Garrett County is a very rural area with lots of land which consists of a hilly topography and a small population of 29,679. Deep Creek Lake is a tourist attraction so during the summer months the population increases greatly with the many vacationers. There is limited sidewalks, street lights and land usage to build sidewalks in areas where residents shop, work and go to school. Some communities are isolated and connectivity is not a feasible option. Garrett County has state parks and town parks with walking trails but extreme weather and entrance fees to state parks make it challenging for residents to use these walking opportunities.

Part 3: Community Partnerships:

Community Partnerships

- **Garrett County Health Department** (*Amy Ritchie*, Kendra McLaughlin Bob Stephens) amy.ritchie@maryland.gov, kendra.mclaughlin@maryland.gov, robert.Stephens@maryland.gov
Contribution: funding opportunities; team collaboration
Vision/Mission: Increase number of residents of all ages who are physically active by utilizing existing sidewalks, town, state park and community trails. And that we along with our collaborators create plans and sustainable programs that allow this to be possible.
- **Garrett County Planning and Land Management** (*J.B. Churchill*) jchurchill@garrettcountry.org
Contribution: map development of existing walking paths & trails and possible areas for new development
Vision/Mission: Promote use of existing trail networks through continued support to Garrett Trails and this Walkability Plan. Include (under Transportation) walkability issues and ideas resulting from this project and from our 2017 Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan in the upcoming Garrett County Strategic Plan
- **Public Works** (*Dwight Emory*) demory@garrettcountry.org
Contribution: engineering expertise and land usage regulations for county roads

Vision/ Mission: Include walkability evaluation and planning where feasible as part of project planning on applicable capital improvement projects.

- **Garrett County Board of Education** (*Rich Wesolowski*, Shannon Haley) richard.wesolowski@garrettcountyschools.org
Contribution: safe routes to school; accessibility to school tracks and walking trails on school property
Vision/ Mission: Make it safer for more children to walk to school to improve physical fitness and boost learning in order to achieve academic excellence while promoting a healthy lifestyle.
- **Garrett College** (*Steve Putnam*, Kathy Meagher) stephen.putnam@garrettcollege.edu, kathy.meagher@garrettcollege.edu
Contribution: parks & rec background; ways to get people to be move active; collaborators with Garrett Trails on the Mosser Road project
Vision/ Mission: Provide safe pedestrian travel between campus and other areas of McHenry. Promote healthy lifestyle and encourage people to increase the amount of daily walking for exercise.
- **MDOT SHA District 6** (*John Wolford*) JWolford@sha.state.md.us
Contribution: engineering expertise and land usage regulations for state roads
Vision/ Mission: Provide safe pedestrian connectivity between all land use facilities for the communities of western Maryland.
Mission: Support and participate in the multi organizational team approach to increase safe convenient pedestrian traffic activity.
- **Town of Oakland** (*Gwen Evans*) townfoak@gmail.com
Contribution: Support plans for improvements of the existing sidewalks, walking paths, parks, and facilities to make Oakland more accessible, enjoyable and friendly for walkers.
Vision/Mission: Promote existing designated walkable areas, and identify areas where walkers would benefit from and utilize, new and improved walking areas/facilities. Oakland would work to expand on existing infrastructure to provide safer, more enjoyable walking facilities.
- **WISP Resort** (*Wanda Mayle*) wmayle@wispresort.com
Contribution: walking advocate; experienced with trail connectivity
Vision/Mission:
- **Garrett Trails** (*Rodney Glotfelty*, Evan Byrne) retrod17@gmail.com, TrailMX@garretttrails.org
Contribution: Trail maintenance and development; trail awareness and use events (maintenance and hikes): data collection with trail counters.
Vision/ Mission: Promote existing trails throughout the county that walkers would benefit from in particular those with easy trailhead access, no entrance fee, and light to moderate terrain. Host/sponsor walking-light hiking events to help increase awareness

of and draw residents to these trails. Continue to lead in the development of a well-used network of high-quality, sustainable trails that provide access to Garrett County's historic, municipal, and environmental treasures.

- **Dr. Fred Surgent** FSurgent@frostburg.edu
Contribution: education and knowledge in the field of exercise science and human performance along with personal experiences with a physically active lifestyle
Vision/Mission:
- **Deep Creek Lake State Park & Sang Run State Park** (Caroline Blizzard Roy Musselwhite)
Contribution: increase signage for walking and bicycle trails; work with health department and local physicians to offer and promote physical activity opportunities at a discounted price for Garrett County residents
Vision/Mission:
- **Walking College Participant** (Caroline Green, MPH) caroline.green1@maryland.gov
Contribution: walking advocate with a focus on Oakland to improve signage/wayfinding, sidewalks, accessibility to walk and bike to work and school, promote the Healthy Parks, Healthy People project with the Maryland State parks and employee of the Maryland Department of Health, Center for Chronic Disease Control and Prevention
Vision/Mission:

Part 4: Team Goals:

1. **Promote use of existing parks and trails by local residents**
2. **Develop more destination trails to improve access to walking with housing complexes**
3. **Expand walking programs in schools and worksites**
4. **Improve walking opportunities through planning**
5. **Improve connectivity of pedestrian facilities**
6. **Establish a web page for walking information/events**

Part 5: Strategic Plan and Timeline:

1. **Promote use of existing parks and trails by local residents**

Strategies:

- Collaboration meeting with State Park Staff to promote use of trails in parks **(6/30/18)**
- Collaboration with physicians to give exercise prescriptions to their patients that will get them limited free access in to state parks in the county **(9/30/18)**
- Collaboration of municipalities to promote use of town park trails **(9/30/18)**

- Develop a Garrett County walking app to motivate residents to use local walking resources and to track usage of these trails **(6/30/19)**

2. Develop more destination trails to improve access to walking with housing complexes

Strategies:

- Collaboration with management of multi-unit housing neighborhoods **(9/30/18)**
- Conduct Walking Audits at multi-unit housing neighborhoods **(6/30/19)**
- Collaboration with Garrett Trails & Garrett College to design and establish destination trails as a result of Walking Audits **(6/30/20)**

3. Expand walking programs in schools and worksites

Strategies:

- Collaboration with Garrett County Public Schools and worksites to allow access to their walking resources **(6/30/18)**
- Develop a Garrett County walking app to motivate students and employees to be active **(6/30/19)**
- Develop a walking encouragement program that utilizes the GC walking app that would be shared with schools and worksites **(6/30/19)**

4. Improve walking opportunities through planning

Strategies:

- Convene a team of stakeholders to get decision makers and funders on board **(9/30/18)**
- Determine what updates should be made to the Garrett County Comprehensive Plan to improve walkability **(6/30/19)**

5. Improve connectivity of pedestrian facilities

Strategies:

- Form an inter-governmental team to obtain funding for pedestrian connectivity projects **(6/30/19)**
- Administer the design and construction of projects that will increase and improve connections between pedestrian walkways **(6/30/20)**

Part 6: Challenges:

- Keeping team members actively involved throughout the process of working towards our team goals

- Adhering to predicted time frame with so many different organizations involved and relying on others to get their part completed in order to move forward
- Available funding and the restrictions on what the money can be used to purchase
- Getting people motivated and keeping them motivated to walk for both exercise and as a form of transportation in safe to walk areas
- Weather conditions
- No Parks & Recs Department
- Limited sidewalks and street lights and limited land space to have sidewalks installed

Part 7: Evaluation:

- 1. Promote use of existing parks and trails**
 - Use of trail trackers to monitor parks usage
 - Garrett County walking app will be used as a data collecting tool
- 2. Develop more destination trails to improve access to walking with housing complexes**
 - Complete a walkability at housing complexes
 - Make walkability recommendations to Garrett County Community Action (planner developer of mixed income housing in Garrett County)
 - Include the walkability plan in the 10 year Garrett County Comprehensive Plan
 - Encourage municipalities and Community Action to include the walkability plan in their housing plans
- 3. Expand walking programs in schools and worksites**
 - Garrett County walking app will be used as a data collecting tool
- 4. Improve walking opportunities through planning**
 - Number of towns that have added or increased sidewalks and installed street lights
 - Number of trails that have been connected to another trail or park
- 5. Improve connectivity of pedestrian facilities**
 - Use of trail trackers